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Abstract of the national paper of Algeria

1. Algeria has demonstrated a steadily growing interest in the development and application of space science and technology as a key means for the implementation of national socio-economic and cultural development programmes, although most of its activities in that area are still focused more on applications than space technology.

2. For instance, in the vital field of remote sensing and cartography, in which Algeria's activities are coordinated by the National Geographic Information Council, representing the relevant national sectors, that interest is reflected in the ever greater use of satellite-derived remote sensing data in various areas related to sustainable development (agriculture, water resources, natural disaster management, environmental protection, land use planning, natural resource exploration and utilization, transport, etc.).

3. In the specific area of remote sensing applications in the transport sector (civil aviation, the merchant navy and meteorology), national space activities are concerned in particular with Earth observation, location and positioning, and data-gathering and transmission. In that connection, the National Meteorology Office operates a number of remote sensing facilities to meet the requirements of, for example, meteorological services, weather and climate monitoring, weather observation and general forecasting, national water resource evaluation, the fisheries industry and migratory locust control.

4. As a State member of the International Civil Aviation Organization, the World Meteorological Organization, the International Maritime Organization and the International Telecommunication Union, Algeria is also directly involved in the Global Navigation Satellite System (GLONASS) the World Weather Watch and its various constituent elements, the system for environmental emergency response to marine pollution and the World System for Emergency and Safety at Sea.

5. At the regional level, Algeria is a member, in particular, of the Regional Centre for Remote Sensing of the North African States and is host country for the headquarters of the African Organization for Cartography and Remote Sensing.

6. In the field of satellite communications, Algeria has made notable progress in meeting national needs, in particular, with regard to telephony and radio and television broadcasting. It operates a domestic satellite network that is currently one of the most dense in the world.

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7. This progress is set to be consolidated in the course of the current year as a result of various projects for upgrading and modernizing the telecommunication network through the introduction of very small aperture terminal (VSAT) systems and the commissioning of a coastal Earth station operating as part of the International Mobile Satellite Organization network with the aim of providing improved services for users in various domains such as telephony and facsimile transmission, data transmission, telex communication, radio paging, distress traffic and personal mobile communications by satellite.

8. In the field of education, training and research, mention should be made of a number of courses offered by Algerian universities. Space-related research activities have national priority status under the Law on Five-year Forward Programming and Policy-setting in the Area of Scientific Research and Technological Development for the Period 1998-2002, promulgated on 22 August 1998. Out of the 30 or so research programmes envisaged by that Law, a dozen or more are connected in some way with remote sensing, space geodesy and space programmes such as the ALSAT project for the design, manufacture and operation of a small satellite. Financed by the State through the National Research Fund and through credits allocated to research establishments and bodies, the implementation of those programmes is entrusted to a national network of research teams and the National Space Technology Centre.

9. As a State party to the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, Algeria regards outer space as the common property of the whole of humanity to be safeguarded, therefore, as a zone of peace and cooperation. Accordingly, it attaches the utmost importance to its contribution to the efforts undertaken by the United Nations through its Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space with the aim of enabling all States, especially developing countries, to enjoy the benefits offered by space science and technology applications. For that reason, Algeria was keen to participate in the work of the Regional Preparatory Conference for the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space for Africa and the Middle East, held in Rabat, and in the establishment of the African Regional Centre for Space Science and Technology—in French language, which is based in the same city.

10. With regard to the forthcoming Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III), Algeria wishes to express its hope that the international community will devote greater attention to strengthening interregional, regional, subregional and bilateral cooperation aimed at facilitating broad access by developing countries to space technologies and techniques and at intensifying programmes to strengthen their national capacities in that field, especially with respect to training, consultancy and partnership.